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AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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IN REPLY REFER TO

AD874156

AGDA (M) (26 Aug 70)

FOR OT UT 702257

28 August 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 519th
Transportation Battalion for Period Ending 30 April 1970

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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(ARMY) ATTN: FOR OT UT, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 519th Transportation Battalion (Truck)
APO San Francisco 96232

THTB-SC

13 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 519th Transportation Battalion for Period
Ending 30 April 1970, RCS-CS For-65 (RI), UIC: WFSQAA

THRU: Commanding General
USARSUPTHAI
ATTN: THOP-OP
APO SF 96233

Commander in Chief
United States Army Pacific
ATTN: GPOP-DT
APO SF 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force
Development, Department of the Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

1. SECTION 1. OPERATIONS: Significant Activities:

a. Two units of the 519th underwent changes of command during the reporting period. Command of the 291st Transportation Company in Korat was assumed by 1LT Charles H. Douglas on 1 April. CPT John H. Hebert, the former unit commander took a position with USARSUPTHAI Plans and Operations. On 1 May, CPT Michael H. Flanagan assumed command of the 260th Transportation Company at Sattahip. He replaced CPT Richard A. King, who departed for an assignment in Alaska.

b. The basic missions of the 519th remained unchanged. The battalion moves all perishable Class I cargo in country, and clears the Sattahip ports of all special and sensitive cargo and all cargo that exceeds the movement capability of the Express Transport Organization (ETO). A detailed explanation of those commodities that must be moved exclusively by military highway was included in last quarter's ORIL.

c. On 15 March, the 569th Transportation Company in Khon Kaen and the 33d Reefer Platoon in Korat were inactivated. A small rear detachment was kept at Camp Khon Kaen until 3 April. At that time the final
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elements of the battalion withdrew from Khon Kaen and final preparations were made by USARSUETHAI for turning over the facility to the Royal Thai Army. The reduction of the battalion force from six companies and a separate platoon to five companies brought about a change in operating concept, particularly reefer operations.

(1) On 9 March, the 313th Transportation Company (Reefer) in Bangkok was directed to begin hauling perishables to the northern most locations in country, i.e. the RTAFB at Udorn and the 809th Engineer Battalion base camp (Ruam Chit Chai) at Sakon Nakhon. This sometimes meant bob-tailing tractors to Korat, picking up vans that had been loaded at the Korat Cold Storage Facility, and moving the cargo north. The reefer vans that formerly belonged to the 33d Platoon were transferred to the 291st in Korat. However the tractors that the 33d had, were turned into Depot. The 291st was left with the task of performing the line haul mission of two companies and the missions of the reefer platoon without an increase in prime movers. Committing the 313th in the manner described allowed the 291st to use all of its tractor power to haul general cargo, ammunition and other non-perishable commodities.

(2) On 1 May, the 313th was directed to assume the last remaining highway movement of perishables being performed by the 291st. This consisted of a tractor with reefer van TDY to Sakon Nakhon and another tractor with van TDY to Ubon. The mission at Sakon Nakhon is to move perishables 3 times a week from the ration breakdown point at Camp Ruam Chit Chai to the Air Force at Nakhon Phanom RTAFB. The mission at Ubon consists of moving perishables from the railhead there to the Air Force cold storage facility, a distance of approximately 6 miles. Prior to assuming this mission, the 313th placed personnel TDY for a 2 week period to familiarize them with the details of the operations at Ubon and Sakon Nakhon.

(3) In February, a new system of moving refrigerated cargo to the Air Force at Takhli and at Ubon was tested and discovered to work satisfactorily. Until 12 February, refrigerated cargo was shipped from Bangkok storage facilities to Takhli and to the Bang Sue railhead for delivery to Ubon. As mentioned above, all reefer cargo goes to Ubon by rail. Shipments did not adhere to any set schedule but were made on an as required basis. Now shipments are made directly from the Sattahip cold storage facility to Takhli and to Bang Sue twice a month. Both Takhli and Ubon are able to stock a 15 day level of perishables. Narrowing the number of shipments to twice a month to each location takes some of the guesswork out of the planning for the utilization of the reefer fleet. Shipping directly from Sattahip rather than from Bangkok eliminates double handling of the cargo since all cargo originates in Sattahip. The 313th third platoon moves the cargo for Takhli to the company motor pool in Bangkok, and switches tractors for the rest of the trip.

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(4) One final innovation in reefer operations came during the month of April with 2 test runs of perishables moving by rail from Bangkok to Udorn. The movement of all reefer cargo to Udorn by this method has not been adopted, but if the results of the experiment are deemed satisfactory, the need to truck perishables to Udorn could be eliminated.

d. The last ORIL discussed the need to occasionally commit the Sattahip-based units to line haul all the way to the forward air bases in order to assist the 291st in satisfactorily supporting the LOC north of Korat. This has become the exception rather than the rule due to two things. First the lifting from the 291st of all responsibilities for moving refrigerated cargo has allowed them to use all of their availability for non-reefer cargo. Second the 291st, through an intensive maintenance effort, has kept its availability at a level sufficiently high to allow it to support its own portion of the LOC.

e. Another item discussed in the last report was the initiation of line haul operations in the 53rd Transportation Company. During the reporting period, the 53rd ran 16 individual convoys. On occasion they were committed to deliver to Udorn, Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom. The unit also provided bobtail tractors to the other line haul units for long convoy runs. The objectives of the experiment were realized. The LN drivers earned their share of TDY and overtime, morale improved and by spending time on the road together, a certain degree of rapport was developed between the LN and GI personnel.

f. In December of last year preparations were begun for the establishment of an overnight support base at Udorn for convoys going from Korat to Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom. An Inter Service Support Agreement (ISSA) was submitted to the 432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Udorn requesting support that would be needed when Camp Khon Kaen closed out in March. The ISSA was approved and after a number of liaison visits, an NCO from this battalion was sent to Udorn to act as permanent liaison with the Air Force. The following support is being provided for convoys travelling north of Korat:

(1) Overnight parking for up to 15 trailers on a gravel area, with a supplemental area being available due to possible increased requirements for a larger convoy.

(2) Overnight parking inside the ASP for up to 12 ammo carrying vehicles.

(3) Fuel.

(4) Emergency repair facilities to include reefer repair.

(5) Billeting for enlisted personnel. Billeting is off post in a downtown hotel at no cost to the individual.

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(6) Messing facilities on a 24 hour basis.

(7) Security for all cargo and equipment. This is both Thai Security Guard and Air Police with sentry dogs.

g. In March a bridge over the Lam Chi River just west of Selaphum, collapsed, and ended 519th line haul operations to Ubon. A number of reconnaissance runs have been made to attempt to find a new route to Ubon. The most promising seems to be route #24 running directly east from Korat. However, there is more construction work needed on the road and the reconnaissance reports indicate that portions of the road may be impassable during the rainy season. There is presently a wooden bridge bypass across the Lam Chi River near Selaphum but its maximum support capability is 18 tons. An empty tractor/trailer combination weigh 16.74 tons which doesn't allow much room for cargo. Until some engineer effort is put into repairing the bridge on route #23, the only military truck movement in and out of Ubon is the rotation of the reefer equipment that is TDY there.

h. In March, new MTOE's were submitted for all units in the battalion. The 260th and 505th Transportation Company revisions were implementations of a new Hotel series TOE for all Transportation Corps units in the Army. MTOE's for all other units were under the Golf series.

i. During the month of April, all units in the battalion drew a certain number of M16 rifles as the initial phase of USARSUPTHAI units converting over to the M16 rifle. Familiarization firing was conducted for all units. During the months of May and June all M14's will be turned in, the balance of new weapons will be drawn, and qualification firing will be conducted.

j. In April, the project of placing checkpoints on the battalion LOC was completed. The more than 1000 miles of highway used by this battalion is covered by 50 checkpoints.

k. On 22 April, the 313th Transportation Company changed its name from "The Spoilers" to "The Providers". For some time, it has been felt that "The Spoilers" was not an appropriate name for a reefer unit. A contest was held in the company to arrive at a new name for the unit, and the name "The Providers" was selected.

l. From 27 - 30 April, a 5 man special photo team from DA shot some film on the S&P floor rebuild program at the 505th Transportation Company maintenance shop at Vayama. The team is based in Hawaii and was in Thailand shooting documentary type films of any unusual military activity. The team's interest was drawn to the rebuild program because of its cost reduction aspects. The film that was shot was sent to Washington for editing. If the footage is found to be worthy of distribution, it will be made available to all news services.

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m. On 30 April and 1 May, LTC Robert L. Vidrick, the battalion commander attended a MILVAN conference in Washington D.C.

2. SECTION 2. LESSONS LEARNED: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations:

a. Personnel:

(1) Observations: The present policies regarding confinement of persons sentenced by special courts-martial are inadequate and unrealistic.

(2) Evaluation: There appears to be an unwritten USARSUPTHAI policy of automatic suspension of confinement applied to all first offenders. The USARSUPTHAI confinement facility in Korat is used primarily as a transient stockade and for pre-trial confinement. Because of this, prisoners must be sent to Camp Kue, Okinawa. However, the facility at Camp Kue will only take prisoners who have 30 days or more remaining on their sentences. If, because of the time required to process a record of trial, or because of the vacation of a suspended sentence, an individual has less than 30 days remaining on his sentence, there is a real question as to whether or not he can be confined. In March, this battalion attempted to confine a first offender (no suspended sentence) who had less than 30 days left of a 45 day sentence, primarily due to delays in receiving the record of trial. He could not be sent to Okinawa, and Korat would not keep him because he was not a transient. After much fruitless argument, the confinement portion of the sentence was reluctantly remitted.

(3) Recommendation: Indiscriminate application of automatic suspension of confinement for all first offenders perverts the rehabilitative philosophy behind suspended sentences, and should cease. Suspensions should be given on a case by case basis and only to those individuals who will benefit from such leniency. If the problem is stockade space, the solution may lie in the building of a stockade at Camp Samae San. A confinement facility at Samae San would also provide a much needed place to impose the Article 15 punishment of correctional custody. In any case, a review of the present USARSUPTHAI confinement policy is needed.

b. Operations:

(1) Sub topic #1. New route to Takhli.

(a) Observations: The present convoy route to Takhli is too long and a good portion of it is over bad road.

(b) Evaluation: The present convoy route to Takhli is to follow Inland Road north to its intersection with route #304, follow 304 north to Kabinburi, take route #33 west to its intersection with route #1 just south of Saraburi and follow route #1 north to Takhli. The trip takes

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from 10 to 13 hours, depending on the number of breakdowns, weather and traffic conditions. Route #33 from Kabinburi to Saraburi is not good road. A number of reconnaissance trips have been made in an effort to find a better, shorter route to Takhli. Route #319 from Phanom Sarakham to Prachin Buri and route #320 north from Prachin Buri were checked out but construction work on the road is still being performed and there is a bridge approximately 10 miles north of Phanom that would need reinforcing. Also an unnumbered route running in the same general direction as 319 and 320 but just west of them, was found to be unsatisfactory. On 22 April, a reconnaissance was made of route #304 from Chachoengsao west to its intersection with route #302 just south of Don Muang Air Port, then north on 302 to its intersection with route #1 and on into Takhli. Though there were some portions of 304 west of Chachoengsao that were rather rough, improvements were being made on the road and much of the road had recently had new construction completed on it. On 25 April, a convoy to Takhli used this road. The running time to Takhli was cut by 2 hours. On 29 April, a second convoy departed on this road but was halted by Thai Police at Chachoengsao and forbidden to proceed any further. The convoy turned around and proceeded to Takhli on the old road. Convoys to Takhli are now using the old route.

(c) Recommendation: Negotiations should be entered into with the Thai Government to obtain permission for this battalion to use the new route. This is advantageous from a safety standpoint and from a cost reduction standpoint. Shortening the route would save on overtime funds for the battalion

(2) Sub topic #2. Physical Security Measures:

(a) Observation: The last ORLL outlined some new procedures that had been implemented in the local area to try and reduce the unacceptable level of thievery that had been prevalent in November and December of last year. The new measures have proven successful. In addition to the local dispatcher at the port, one has been placed at the U.S. Army Depot Thailand in Sattahip. The two dispatchers keep in constant communication with one another and when an unusual length of time elapses between the time that a load departs the port and the time that it arrives at the depot, a search party goes out in search of the vehicle. The battalion has recently acquired some additional communications equipment and will shortly put it into operation. This will allow the port and depot dispatchers to communicate without resorting to the telephone. An accurate evaluation of the effectiveness of this equipment will be made in the next ORLL. The tightening up of physical security measures has made it extremely difficult for the gangster element to operate. Since he now has a GI assistant driver on all deliveries and a GI checker at various points in the system, the would-be thief must have GI assistance to successfully complete any illegal action. In February, one such attempt was made involving an NCO from the 53d Trans. Co. The GI went to his commander, who in turn went to the CID, and a trap was set. Under the pretense of cooperating with the thief, the NCO led the driver into an

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unauthorized area with the stolen load. The CID and Thai police were present to make the necessary arrests and save the cargo and equipment. In April, another truckload of equipment was saved. In this case it appears that the GI was involved in the theft but the alert actions of the port and depot dispatchers allowed the recovery of the stolen property before it could be disposed of.

(b) Recommendations: A constant emphasis must be placed on security of supplies and equipment. Close cooperation among the battalion, the military police and the CID is an absolute necessity. Instilling a sense of responsibility in personnel, to make them want to stop acts of thievery is extremely valuable.

(3) Sub topic #3. Security of reefer cargo helped by alternating routes.

(a) Observations: Reefers running north from Sattahip are extremely vulnerable to hijacking when travelling in increments smaller than convoy size.

(b) Evaluation: Because of the peculiarity of reefer shipments, such as the need to ship day and night and in single loads, reefer vans do not always have the protection afforded a convoy sized movement. During the month of February, a number of hijacking attempts were directed against reefer vans travelling the Inland Road to Bangkok at night. The procedure was for a man to lie on the side of the road faking injury, with a second man flagging the reefer down. As the reefer slowed to a halt, 7 or 8 individuals would rush out from the bushes and attempt to take control of the truck. Fortunately, the driver was able to getaway each time with no harm done and no loss of equipment. As a result of these activities, the 313th was given authority to move reefer cargo over the Coastal Road (Route #3) to Bangkok and directed to alternate routes in such a manner as to keep from establishing a pattern. Once this technique was adopted, the hijacking attempts stopped. That they stopped may have been coincidence, but nevertheless, they stopped.

(c) Recommendation: That alternate routing be continued for reefer runs.

c. Training:

(1) Observations: A reeducation program for drivers on their responsibilities for vehicle maintenance is a must.

(2) Evaluation: The majority of drivers in a battalion having as tangible a mission as this one does, exhibit a fierce pride in their job performances. It has been observed that so much emphasis goes into the mission accomplishment, and the important part that these drivers play

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in this mission accomplishment, that they sometimes forget a very crucial aspect of their duties--driver maintenance. The driver that has been with the unit a short time is ordinarily fairly conscientious about performing his maintenance responsibilities because he has just been taught what they are and all of the steps are fresh in his mind. The difficulty arises with the driver who has been doing the job for months and, in the case of some of our LN's, years. He has taken for granted the maintenance that he once diligently performed, and if he is still pulling his maintenance checks, he is probably not aware of the latest procedures. And so a refresher program is necessary to rekindle the maintenance awareness among our drivers, particularly our LN drivers. During the month of April, a 20 hour course of instruction on driver maintenance was conducted by the Civilian Personnel Office in Korat. Seventy One of the drivers from the 291st Transportation Company were awarded Certificates of Completion. Plans are to use the same teaching materials to teach a similar course for the other units in the battalion.

(3) Recommendation: Refresher courses in driver maintenance be given at periodic intervals.

d. Intelligence: None.

e. Logistics:

(1) Sub topic #1. Project Clean Sweep.

(a) Observation: An organized program, with command emphasis can uncover a good deal of excess.

(b) Evaluation: On 16 February, Project Clean Sweep was put into effect. Project Clean Sweep in a USARSUPTHAI exercise to uncover and turn in all excess property throughout the command. The battalion placed an E-6 in charge of the project, identified an excess 12 ton van as a "Clean Sweep" van, and sent the NCO (SSG Chase) and his van around the countryside collecting excess property from all of its 5 units. When all of the excess had been accumulated and turned in, the dollar value of the property totalled nearly \$50,000.

(c) Recommendation: That more well organized, "command emphasis" programs be considered to eliminate other troublesome areas.

(2) Sub topic #2. Consolidation of Property Books.

(a) Observation: The lack of fully qualified personnel at unit level, makes proper maintenance of property books a problem.

(b) Evaluation: Many units do not have the trained personnel at company level to accurately and properly post and maintain a property

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book. Property Accountability is a very crucial item and the improper maintenance of property books is unacceptable. Because the 5 units and 2 detachments of the battalion are spread out in 4 different locations, efficient supervision over the property books is difficult. Therefore, during the month of April, a project was initiated of consolidating all property books at battalion level. As of this date, the property books of 2 units and one detachment have been brought in.

(c) Recommendation: That consolidation of unit property books at battalion level be considered elsewhere when this will lead to the improvement of property accountability.

f. Communications: None.

g. Organization: None.

h. Safety:

(1) Sub topic #1. Destruction of S&P trailers by fire.

(a) Observation: Improperly adjusted brake systems and bad tires can cause the destruction of trailers and the cargo that they are carrying.

(b) Evaluation: On 25 March, a locked brake system caused a fire which led to the destruction of an S&P trailer and nearly a quarter of a million dollars worth of cargo that it was carrying. On 23 April, a flat tire caused a fire which destroyed another trailer and its cargo, of a value in excess of \$83,000. In both cases, the use of fire fighting equipment of various sorts failed to halt the fire once it had started. It was determined, after the first fire, that locked brakes caused an overheating of the system and eventually the fire. It was also surmised that if brakes are going to lock up they are probably going to do so shortly after the trailer gets rolling. A directive was put out that all convoys would halt 15 minutes after departure time to check for any signs of overheating on any of the trailer wheels. The most probable cause of the second fire was a tire that blew out or went flat and the resulting flailing action of the tire as it broke apart, caused sufficient friction to start the fire. The tire was not flat at the 15 minute check. It was also supposed that a supply of water to cool the system might have saved the trailer once it had been pulled over with the tire smoking. Dry fire extinguishers were used but to no avail. A second directive was put out directing a stop every 50 miles to check for overheating and for bad tires and also directing that all tractors carry a 5 gallon can of water on convoys. One 1/4 ton trailer from each unit is also being modified with a rack to allow it to carry additional fire extinguishers, water cans, sand and pioneer tools. This fire

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trailer" will accompany ammo-carrying convoys.

(c) Recommendation: Close attention be paid to the adjustment of brake systems and the condition of tires prior to departure on convoys.

(2) Sub topic #2. Interval Signs.

(a) Observation: The use of interval signs help prevent tailgating accidents.

(b) Evaluation: Tailgating is one of the particularly bothersome causes of accidents in this battalion. Drivers fail to keep the proper interval and when a sudden stop is necessary the front end of the truck usually ends up embedded in the rear end of another vehicle. In order to assist drivers in determining what proper interval is, a series of interval signs have been erected in the Sattahip area. The set is made up of three signs, one that identifies the start point, one that identifies the 50 meter interval and one that identifies the 100 meter interval. The signs are in English and in Thai. They have been erected at the Deep Water Port, East West highway as it comes out of the ASP in Vayama, Inland Road just north of East West highway, and outside the main gate at Samne San. These signs were erected in February. Tailgating accidents have decreased significantly since then.

(c) Recommendation: The use of these signs be considered for use elsewhere in country.

2 Incl

1. Organization Chart

~~2. Operations Report~~
~~(Statistics)~~

Incl 2 wd HQ DA


ROBERT L. VIERICK

LTC, TC

Commanding

THOP-OP (13 May 70) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 519th Transportation Battalion for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, Headquarters, United States Army Support, Thailand, ATTN: THOP-OP,
APO 96233 8 JUN 1970

THRU: Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of
the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

The Operational Report of the 519th Transportation Battalion has been reviewed and is forwarded with the following comments:

a. Reference para 2a. Nonconcur with the recommendation.

(1) There is no unwritten USARSUPTHAI policy on automatic suspension of sentences to confinement in the first offense case. The written policy implements DA policy and is expressed in para 17a, USARSUPTHAI Regulation 27-2, which provides for suspension "unless exceptional circumstances exist." Each commander naturally thinks that his case is exceptional; command-wide, confinement has been authorized in very few cases.

(2) The post-trial confinement of US prisoners in Thailand is objectionable to the Royal Thai Government. Consequently, the US Embassy's permission to construct a stockade is limited to a transient facility.

(3) The use of stockades for correctional custody under Article 15, UCMJ, is prohibited by AR 27-10.

b. Reference para 2b(1). Concur with the recommendation. This headquarters is taking action to secure approval for use of the route to Takhli as recommended.

c. Reference para 2b(2). Concur with the recommendation.

(1) The use of alternate communications other than telephone is in keeping with normal physical security policies and should enhance the security posture of the battalion.

(2) The use of military assistant drivers and checkers is a very important step in providing additional security.

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(3) A program of swift and appropriate punishment for US Army personnel involved in thefts, plus an educational program designed to instill responsibility in an individual, are extremely important in increasing security of battalion property.

d. Reference para 2e(2). Concur with the observation and evaluation but the recommendation is not relevant since all other battalions have consolidated property books. The 519th Transportation Battalion has qualified supply personnel in the units to perform the reduced requirements because of the consolidation of the PBO. There is a need at battalion for two E5 or E6 Supply Specialists 76Y20 or 76Y40.

e. Reference para 2h(1). Concur with the recommendation. Close attention must be taken to adjustment of the brake system on 12 ton S&P semi-trailers to prevent brake locking. However, this is not the only factor causing cited safety hazard. Failure to keep the relay valve cleaned and operable will also cause brake locking or dragging. In addition, use of trailer brakes only, to slow down tractor/trailer combinations, has been a contributing factor to cited problem. The unit has been instructed by both technical assistance visits and correspondence in correction of these areas.

f. Concur with all other comments. Appropriate action will be taken to initiate recommendations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


T.L. ESTES
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

GPOP-DT (13 May 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 519th Transportation Battalion for
Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 17 JUL 70

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

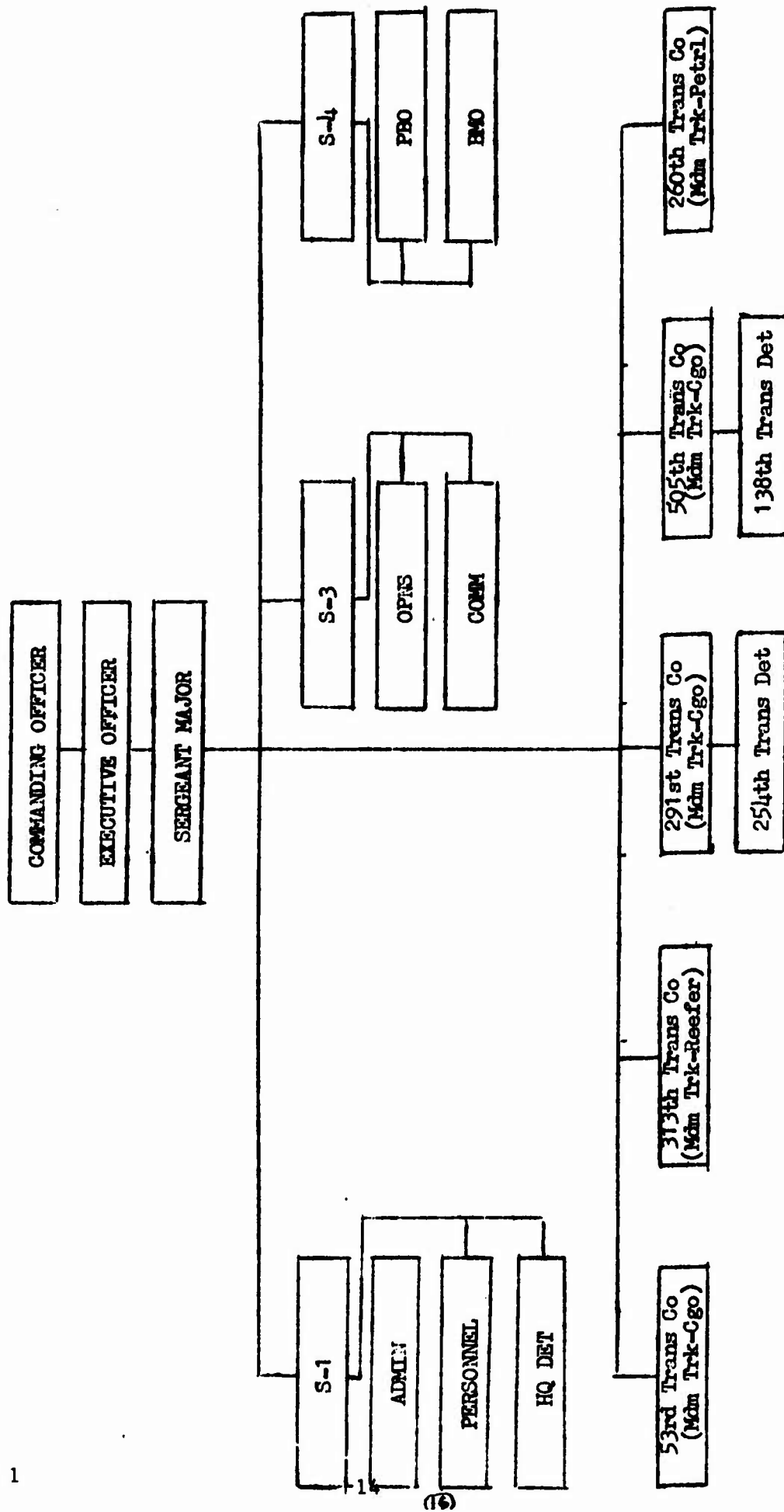
FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



D.D. CLINE
2LT, AGC
Asst AG

519TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)

Incl 1



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Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified.)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		UNCLASSIFIED	
		2b. GROUP	
3. REPORT TITLE			
Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 519th Transportation Battalion			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Feb to 30 Apr 70.			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
CO, 519th Transportation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
13 May 1970		17	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO.		702257	
c.		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

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DD FORM 1473
1 NOV 65

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